

10 VINES FOR AN AUTUMN GLOW | SPARROW ID TIPS



Beauty in Your Backyard and Beyond

Birds & Blooms[®] *extra!*

FALL BIRDS!

*Surprising
ways they plan
ahead for the
cold season*

**WILD
WONDERS**
Explore the
beauty of
the West

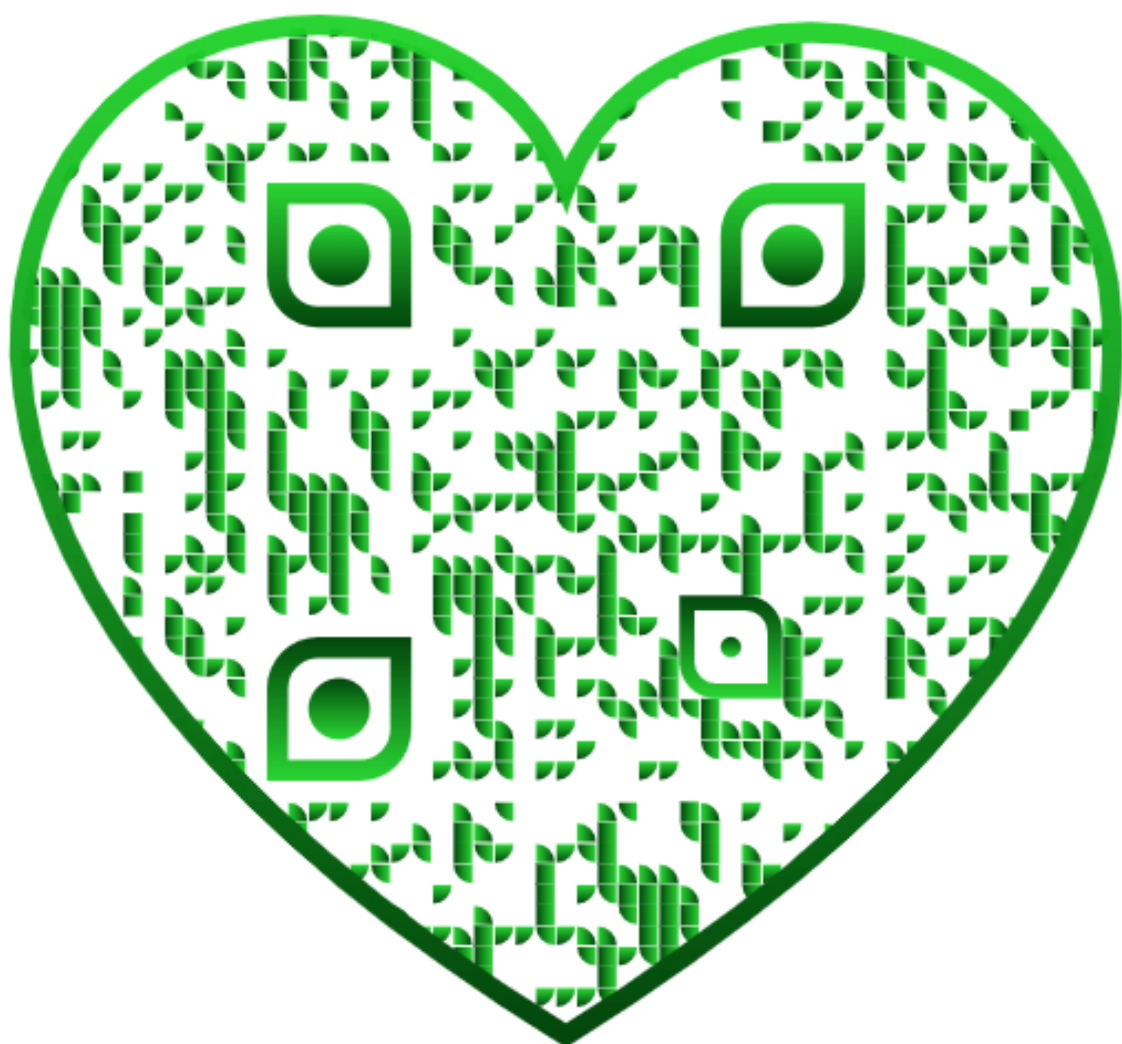
AMERICA'S
no.1
Bird & Garden
MAGAZINE

TUFTED
TITMOUSE

DESIGN GOALS
Best small trees
for big impact

EXPERTS REVEAL
The right time to
clean out birdhouses

DISCOVER the hidden meanings of flowers



Contents

BIRDS & BLOOMS EXTRA | FALL 2025



45

Advice from
our pros

24



FEATURES

24

Buried Treasure

Discover how and why some critters stash food away to prep for winter.

32

Small Trees for Smart Designs

Use beautiful compact specimens to transform your landscape.

38

Best of the West

Explore the butterflies, birds and blooms that call this region home.

GARDEN WITH A PURPOSE

5 Plant Profile

6 Feeder Talk
Cooper's hawks

8 Top 10
Vines for fall color

12 Yard Smarts
History of floriography

16 Essentials
Sparrow ID tips

17 Bird Tales

BACKYARD CHAT

45 Ask the Experts

50 Field Guide
All about squirrels' nests

52 Across the Fence
Garden tips for autumn

53 Caption This!

54 Photo Quiz

56 Did You Know?
Chipmunk facts

IN EVERY ISSUE

4 From the Editor

55 For the Reader



32



50

ON THE COVER

Tufted titmouse
Photo by John Gill

Vines for Autumn	p. 8
Sparrow ID Tips	p. 16
Fall Birds	p. 24
Wild Wonders	p. 38
Design Goals	p. 32
Cleaning Birdhouses	p. 45
Meanings of Flowers	p. 12

ID Made Easy

I'm no pro, but after many years of bird-watching, I feel fairly confident identifying a lot of birds. The small yellow warblers in spring plumage? Yep, I can tell them apart. Typical Midwest feeder guests? Not a problem.



The handful of black, white and sometimes red woodpeckers? Sure, pretty simple. But a hawk in flight? Um, can it come a bit closer? Or a sparrow foraging on the ground and camouflaged in leaf litter? I'm going to need a minute ...

In this issue, see an amazing photo of a Cooper's hawk that you can really study in "The Pro of Pursuit" on page 6, and learn a few key ways to tell a Cooper's from a sharp-shinned hawk, such as which one tends to flap more in flight.

If sparrows stump you sometimes, "Sparrows to Know" on page 16 will help. See four commonly confused sparrows and read about clues for correctly identifying each.

I hope these stories and each and every photo we share here help you learn about and successfully identify the birds you see around you.

Kirsten

KIRSTEN SCHRADER, CONTENT DIRECTOR



HANDY HINT

A female cardinal started flying into my bedroom window, so I cut the silhouette of the Steller's jay out of the January 2024 cover and taped it to the inside of the window. The cardinal hasn't been back since.

Fran Wagner NEWPORT, PA

JUST FOR FUN!

What do birds say on Halloween? Trick or tweet! Last fall I decided to turn my skeleton into a bird-friendly feeding station. With a little creativity, and seed mix, field corn, sunflower seeds and a few peanuts, I offered the birds a spooktacular treat. After I put it together, several birds visited, including eastern bluebirds, finches and woodpeckers. This project was fun to make, but it was even more fun watching the birds enjoy it.

Kimberly Gross WOODBINE, KS



SUET SAFETY

When it comes to suet, fat is the critical element. Lard is a safe alternative to real rendered suet, but skip other fats such as bacon drippings. Though tempting, avoid adding bread and table scraps to homemade suet mixes. Good choices include peanut butter, rolled oats, dried fruit, birdseed, cornmeal and flour.



birdsblooms



@birdsblooms



birdsblooms



@birdsblooms

All-Season All-Star

Arrowwood viburnum adds seasonal interest with wildlife perks

All That Glitters
arrowwood
viburnum

BRING ON THE BIRDS

Arrowwood's dense branching and suckers that can form thickets create year-round cover for birds. Songbirds, turkey and grouse eat the fruit in early fall.

Arrowwood Viburnum

Viburnum dentatum spp.,
Zones 2 to 8

This low-maintenance and versatile native shrub packs a beneficial punch in the garden. Bright white flower clusters attract pollinators in late spring and turn into blue drupes from summer to fall. Some cultivars have different characteristics, such as height or autumn color.

Attracts: 🐦 🦋 🐛

Light needs: Part to full sun.

Soil: Prefers moist, well-draining soil.

Size: Up to 10 feet tall but some cultivars, such as All That Glitters, are more compact.

Host plant: Spring azure butterflies and hummingbird moths lay eggs on this plant.

Foliage: A glossy green turns to gold, orange or red in the fall, depending on the cultivar.

Cooper's hawk



The Pro of the Pursuit

Fast, focused and fierce, the Cooper's hawk is built for the chase **BY AMY GRISAK**

Considered a deft flier and known for chasing prey on the wing, a Cooper's hawk on the hunt can dart through dense tree cover at speeds of up to 50 mph. This agile, crow-sized raptor can even flip upside down midflight to snatch another bird out of the air—an impressive maneuver few birds of prey can match.

Bigger than the Boys

Adult male and female Cooper's hawks both have bluish gray backs, blackish caps and white undersides with reddish bars, but the females have slightly duller coloring. These hawks also have considerable size dimorphism; the females are nearly one-third larger than the males.

Spot the Difference

Cooper's hawks and sharp-shinned hawks are notoriously difficult to tell apart, but there are a few things to consider. David Barber, senior research biologist at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Kempton, Pennsylvania, says, "In flight, the sharp-shinned hawks tend to fly more erratically since they are a lighter bird. They flap more."

He notes that one rule of thumb is, "If you can count the wing beats, it's probably a Cooper's."

David says, "The Cooper's is more stocky overall. It tends to have a bigger head and a more rounded tail."

Wild Woods to Backyards

Look for Cooper's hawks in forests and open river country. "They are quite adaptable and tolerate humans really well. They go where the food is," David says. There are very healthy pigeon and dove populations for them to prey on in urban areas, as well as birds at feeders in suburban areas.

From Nesting to Nestlings

As pair-bonded mates, David says, "The males come back to the area first and set up the territory. They start nesting in early to late April into early May."

The male does most of the nest building, creating a nest roughly 2 feet in height and diameter, often in a fork high in a tree. The female lays two to six bluish white eggs and incubates them, while the male provides food. "The chicks stay in the nest about 35 days," David says.

In Hot Pursuit

"Cooper's hawks primarily feed on birds," David says. Robins, jays, doves, pigeons and even chickens, plus some small mammals are all regular prey.

If an unwelcome Cooper's hawk is hunting at your feeding stations, David says it's possible to try and dissuade them, or any predatory bird. "Take the feeders inside," he says. "Do it for a week or two." Without a consistent food source, the hawk will most likely move on to another location.

THE FEED



Juvenile Cooper's hawk

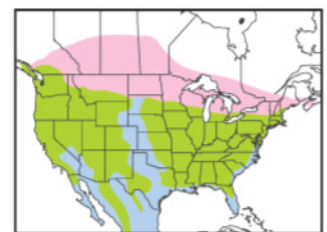
EAT LIKE A HAWK

These efficient predators burn a lot of energy and must hunt frequently, consuming 12% to 15% of their body weight each day to stay fueled and meet their high metabolic demands. That's like a 120-pound person eating about 14 pounds of food a day.

STRONG SILENT TYPE

Cooper's hawks are not highly vocal birds outside of the breeding season. A *cak-cak-cak* is the most common call, and it is typically utilized by either sex when protecting the nest or young.

COOPER'S HAWK RANGE MAP



- All Seasons - Uncommon
- Breeding - Uncommon
- Winter - Uncommon

Vines for a Vibrant Fall

Give your yard an autumn glow with colorful climbers **BY PEGGY RICCIO**





1 Crimson glory vine

VITIS COIGNETIAE,
ZONES 5 TO 9

Native to Japan, crimson glory vine's grapes are loved by birds, and its showy gold-red-purple fall foliage is loved by gardeners. Be aware and prepared to prune because this aggressive grower can readily overtake nearby plants and structures.

Why we love it:

After the leaves drop, the flexible bare vines are great for crafting festive decor such as wreaths, orbs and garlands.

2 Love-in-a-puff

CARDIOSPERMUM
HALICACABUM, ZONES 9
TO 11, ANNUAL ELSEWHERE

Easy to grow from seed, love-in-a-puff has tiny white flowers followed by light green, inflated balloonlike seedpods. This warm-weather annual is considered invasive in some southern states, so check before planting in your area.

Why we love it:

The unique "balloons" can be used in floral arrangements and the black seeds with white hearts are easy to save and sow again.



3 Firecracker vine

IPOMOEA LOBATA (FORMERLY MINA LOBATA),
ZONES 9 TO 11, ANNUAL ELSEWHERE

Firecracker vine is a warm-weather vine that blooms later, from mid-summer to frost, attracting many pollinators. Flowers are like little flags of yellow, orange and red tubular blooms stacked up along the stem.

Why we love it: Because of its light weight, this vine can be grown in a container and trained up a structure such as a bamboo trellis.

GETTING A HEAD START *To add these vines to your garden, you can start now by making a plan and deciding where to plant. Save this article or take note of the ones you like because you won't be purchasing or starting the seeds until next spring.*



4 Boston ivy

PARTHENOCISSUS TRICUSPIDATA, ZONES 4 TO 8

Boston ivy grows in sun or shade, adheres to surfaces readily and turns scarlet and purple in the fall. Be careful where you plant this long-lasting, woody vine as it is invasive in scattered parts of North America and may damage the structures it climbs.

Why we love it: This ivy can serve many purposes in garlands, in arrangements or as a spiller in containers.



5

5 Wood vamp

HYDRANGEA BARBARA
(FORMERLY *DECUMARIA BARBARA*), ZONES 6 TO 8

A cousin of climbing hydrangeas, wood vamp is native to the Southeast. It can climb trees or cover stone or brick buildings without causing damage. It blooms if it is climbing but not if it is grown as a ground cover. Fall foliage is butter yellow.

Why we love it:

Bees and butterflies love the fragrant white flowers which bloom from spring to summer.



6

6 Golden clematis

CLEMATIS TANGUTICA,
ZONES 4 TO 9

After blooming bell-shaped yellow flowers, golden clematis produces seed heads straight out of a Dr. Seuss book: large fluffy mopheads. This vine must be trained up a lattice or trellis.

Why we love it:

This lightweight perennial vine can cascade over evergreen shrubs, providing summer flowers and fall interest with the silver whorls of seed heads.



7

7 Magnolia vine

SCHISANDRA CHINENSIS, ZONES 4 TO 7

Magnolia vine thrives in moist shady places and has lush foliage that turns yellow in the fall. The female plant produces red berries that ripen in the fall. Instead of purchasing male and female plants, try growing the self-fertile cultivar Eastern Prince.

Why we love it: If birds do not get to them first, the flavorful fruit can be eaten or used in beverages. The foliage is lemon-scented and the flowers are fragrant.

GOOD SUPPORT SYSTEM *Some vines are perennials and get heavy with age. Plant them near a strong permanent structure that can handle the weight, such as an arbor. Don't rely on light wooden or vinyl fences, as they may buckle under too much weight.*



8

8 Autumn Revolution American bittersweet

CELASTRUS SCANDENS, ZONES 3 TO 8

This cultivar of native bittersweet has both male and female reproductive parts, so you only need one plant to get large red-orange berries in the fall.

Why we love it: The vibrant berries are perfect for fall crafts, decorations or cut arrangements, and the flexible vine is ideal for creating wreaths.



9 Moonlight Chinese hydrangea vine

HYDRANGEA HYDRANGEOIDES
(FORMERLY *SCHIZOPHRAGMA*
HYDRANGEOIDES),
ZONES 4 TO 8

With white flowers similar to lacecap hydrangeas, this vine can cover brick and stone walls and does well in partial shade. In the fall, leaves turn yellow.

Why we love it:

Easy to care for, Moonlight has beautiful silvery blue-green heart-shaped leaves.

GETTING CRAFTY WITH GRAPEVINE

After the foliage dies off on grapevines such as crimson glory, try making these crafts. Don't forget to add miniature lights, decorations and ribbons!

- Wreaths
- Orbs
- Obelisks
- Baskets
- Rustic Christmas trees



10 Hops

HUMULUS LUPULUS, ZONES 4 TO 9

These very vigorous vines cover arbors and pergolas and can be trained to serve as a screen. Male plants produce flowers and female plants produce the cones that are best known as an ingredient in beer.

Why we love it: The cones add an interesting touch to wreaths and dried or fresh floral arrangements.

Peggy Riccio, horticulturist and garden communicator, enjoys growing many of these vines at her Virginia home for fall color, floral arrangements and wreaths.



Read Between the Blooms

Travel back to Victorian times, when bouquets sent messages of love, friendship and more **BY JILL STAAKE**



1. A Bouquet for Friendship

Combine zinnia blooms for everlasting friendship, apple blossom for preference, pansy for a friend you think of often and eucalyptus to protect and strengthen the bond of friendship.

2. Clematis

Representing cleverness and ingenuity, clematis reflects its ability to cling and climb.

3. Buttercup

The meaning, “You are radiant with charm,” may come from a tradition of holding a buttercup under one’s chin to see the yellow glow.

A bouquet of flowers has been a thoughtful gift to give for centuries, but during the Victorian times, it signified much more. The combination of blooms often sent a specific message, which recipients eagerly deciphered for hidden meanings.

Jessica Roux is the author and illustrator of *Floriography: An Illustrated Guide to the Victorian Language of Flowers*, which delves into the stories behind floral code. “While it was easy to find historic lists of flowers and their meanings, I found myself wondering why some of these flowers had specific meanings,” she says.

To find out, Jessica hit the books. “I first looked

at books written about floriography from the Victorian era, such as Kate Greenaway’s 1884 *Language of Flowers* and Charlotte de la Tour’s 1819 *Le Langage des Fleurs*,” Jessica says. “From there, I dove into mythology, history and folklore that featured flowers.”

Behind the Meanings

Jessica’s research turned up fascinating tales from a bygone era. “Orange blossoms are one of my favorites—the ultimate Victorian flower of love, particularly for weddings. The sweet-smelling blooms became all the rage thanks to Queen Victoria,” she says. After receiving an orange blossom brooch from Albert, Victoria wore





1

them on her wedding dress and headdress. The royal couple likely knew that in ancient Greece, Gaea was said to have given these flowers to Hera upon her marriage to Zeus.

Jessica also loves the story of the cornflower, which means “hope in love” in the language of flowers. “The bloom is also called bachelor’s button,” she says, “and folklore states that a young man is to wear the flower in his buttonhole when he falls in love. If the flower dies quickly, it means his adoration is unrequited. If the flower lasts, there is hope his love will be returned.”

Men and women both sent coded bouquets, with tidings of love and friendship—or more sinister implications. Hellebore means “We shall overcome scandal and slander,” while lavender stands for distrust. Some say the asp that killed Cleopatra was hidden in a bundle of lavender.

Floriography Today

In addition to intriguing stories like these, Jessica’s book features charming illustrations inspired by those of Beatrix Potter, Mary Delany and Maria Sibylla Merian. She’s an avid gardener herself and loves to include flowers with special meanings when she gives bouquets to friends. “One I always include is the zinnia,” she says. “They mean everlasting friendship, which makes it a really wonderful gift.”

Try sending a message of your own with some of her bouquet ideas shown here, and learn more in her book.

1. Carnation

A legend of carnations blooming from where the Virgin Mary’s tears fell led to this plant’s association with heartache and a mother’s eternal love.

2. Lady’s Slipper

Since it is difficult to cultivate, lady’s slipper represents capriciousness.

3. Chamomile

Energy in adversity, which is chamomile’s meaning, may come from its many healing properties.

4. A Bouquet for Marriage

Use rose for true love, ivy for fidelity, myrtle for hope and love in marriage and dahlia for commitment and eternal love.

5. A Bouquet for New Beginnings

Combine crocus for youthful glee, daisy for innocence, lilac for first love, baby’s breath for purity and wheat for riches.

6. Cattail

A symbol of peace and prosperity, cattail’s meaning may have come from its many traditional uses.



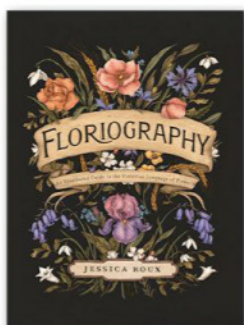
2



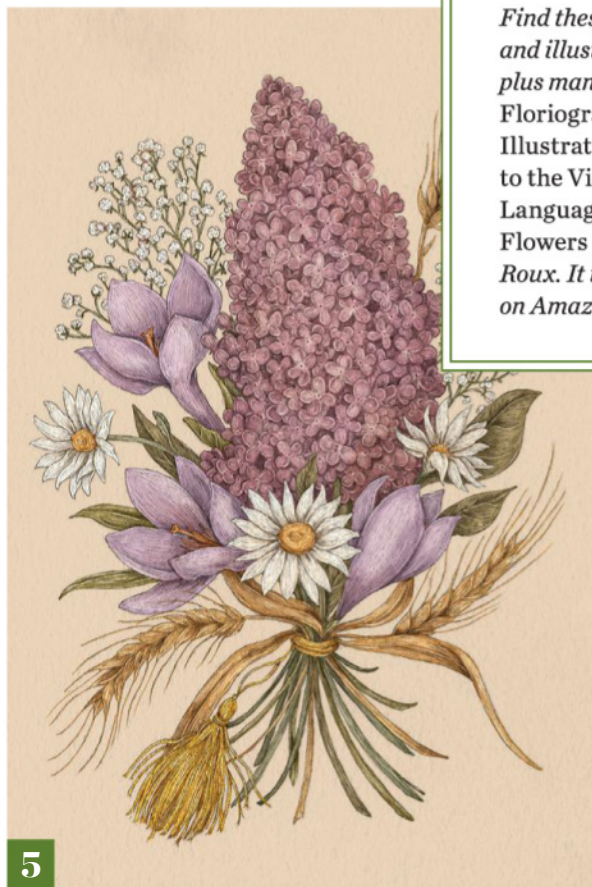
3



4



*Find these meanings and illustrations, plus many more in **Floriography: An Illustrated Guide to the Victorian Language of Flowers** by Jessica Roux. It is available on Amazon for \$18.*



5



6



HOUSE SPARROW

This invasive bird is easy to find almost anywhere there are buildings. They are chunkier than native sparrows. Breeding males have a black bib and eye rings, white cheeks, a gray crown and a reddish neck. Females have stripy tan, brown and black backs.



SONG SPARROW

Tell song sparrows apart by their stripes. Their off-white chest is decorated with dark brown feathers that form rough streaks. They also have rich red-brown stripes on their head, chest, neck and back. These stripe patterns can vary by region.

Sparrows to Know

Learn little tricks to tell these similar songbirds apart

BY RACHEL MAIDL



AMERICAN TREE SPARROW

Both the male and female sport a rusty patch that paints the top of the head from bill to crown and a red streak across the eye. Each has a relatively plain chest with no stripes, and usually with a dark smudge in the center. You may also notice the bicolored bill: dark above and yellow below.



CHIPPING SPARROW

These sparrows are similar to the American tree sparrow, but you can tell them apart by the black eye streak, darker feathers that touch the top of the beak, and a slightly more gray chest. In winter, their rusty crowns are a duller tan, with fine black streaks, and the birds look slightly browner overall.

TEMPTING TREATS

Attract native sparrows by spreading sunflower seed, safflower seed, white millet, thistle seed or cracked corn on the ground. They'll also occasionally visit backyard feeders or birdbaths.

Fall Sights

*Readers share the real stories behind
these cool bird snapshots*

Each year, chipmunks, squirrels and blue jays forage for acorns in a small clearing at the back of my property. I really enjoy watching the blue jays interact in the autumn and love their cool blue colors contrasting with the red and orange palette of the vivid leaves.

Bill McMullen ROCKLAND, ON



I set up an autumn-themed photo op, stocked a galvanized can with peanuts and waited for blue jays to arrive. I've learned that if you want blue jays to stop by, just put out peanuts. In this photo there seemed to be a difference of opinion as to who gets to eat first. I really like the colors—the orange pumpkin makes the colors of the blue jays pop.

Steven Biegler
NORTH BELLMORE, NY



One morning during fall

migration, I went for a walk in the wooded area behind my house, hoping to find some new arrivals—winter birds that migrated in overnight. I immediately heard kinglets! Ruby-crowned and golden-crowned kinglets were everywhere. Determined to get a good photo of a golden-crowned kinglet, I stood very still and waited for the group to come closer to me. This one hopped around in the brush and weeds, and finally came close enough for me to snap a clear shot. I love the way it was watching me as closely as I was watching it!

Gina Sanders GREER, SC



“

This male ruby-throated hummingbird found a nice place to rest on top of some viburnum berries as he guarded his feeder.

Linda Petersen
TERRIL, IA



KEEP AWAY!

Male hummingbirds are very territorial and known to be remarkably feisty about defending food sources.

At 61 years old, I had never been

to Yellowstone National Park, so I went last fall. What a treasure it is! While driving through the park early one morning, we came upon a lot of cars pulled over on the side of the road. We stopped too, and there in the top of a pine tree was a great gray owl! It didn't seem to mind all the attention and remained there long enough for me to capture a few shots before it finally flew off.

Glenda Mueller ROCHESTER, MN



A local pond was home to a dozen wood ducks one year. When I found them, I visited with my camera several days in a row trying to capture some nice photos. This was the best shot of the male and female together. They made a beautiful couple!

Della Alcorn REDDING, CA



We often see cedar waxwings

along coastal Oregon in the spring. But a few years ago in fall, I heard their sweet tweets while I walked along a trail and spotted a small group of them among the beautiful foliage. The waxwings were dining on the last of the summer fruit before heading to warmer southern latitudes.

Amy Williams
LINCOLN CITY, OR



ON THE MOVE

Cedar waxwings may vary their breeding and winter grounds based on available food, so they are known for being nomadic and irregular visitors.

The goldfinches in our yard

provide many hours of entertainment and photo opportunities. They enjoy the many sunflowers to the fullest for months. In the fall, when the flowers start to fade, I cut down stalks a few at a time and leave them in the wheelbarrow to give the birds even easier access. They constantly challenge each other for the various seed heads.

Paula Zanter-Stout
MOSES LAKE, WA



Since moving to Oregon from

California, I have been captivated by the birds and nature my new state has to offer. During a walk in my neighborhood I found this Anna's hummingbird singing away in a tree that was changing colors for fall. This photo is important to me because it captures the beauty and peace I feel in Oregon's gorgeous scenery!

Tina Sellers DAMASCUS, OR



COOL COLORS

Anna's hummingbirds are known for their rose-red throats, but they may look black, gold or purple in some lights.



I see lots of Carolina chickadees. I love their personalities and how curious they are! This one was looking especially awesome in my crape myrtle tree among the fall colors.

Lisa Watkins
MECHANICSVILLE, VA



I found an eastern screech-owl one

winter roosted in this tree cavity. When the sun was out, the owl was in this spot sleeping and soaking up the heat. Once spring rolled around, the owl was no longer roosting in here. However, several months later in the fall, we had a really cold morning, so I went to check on the roosting spot and there it was, back again! I took this photo that morning of the screech-owl snoozing away.

Andy Raupp MONTELO, WI

TWO MORPHS

Eastern screech-owls can be either gray morph or red morph (shown here) and seem to vary by individuals, not region.



BURIED TREASURE

FOR SOME CRITTERS, CACHING FOOD
IS AN IMPRESSIVE SURVIVAL TECHNIQUE
THAT KEEPS THEM FROM GOING
HUNGRY IN THE HARSHTEST MONTHS

BY KEN KEFFER



PAUL BANNICK

A family of acorn woodpeckers will cache hundreds to thousands of nuts in a single tree, which is known as a granary.

Long before the first snowflakes of winter fall, many animals are preparing for the upcoming season of scarcity. According to Dylan Lallemand, volunteer and stewardship coordinator for the Fenner Nature Center in Lansing, Michigan, it may seem a bit surprising that animals save food, but “Without this behavior some species wouldn’t be able to survive harsh winter conditions.”

FILLING THE CUPBOARD

Caching is simply storing foods for later, and this behavior really picks up in the fall. “A key aspect of caching is choosing foods that will last a long time without spoiling,” Dylan says. The cooler temperatures also help prevent spoilage.

Tufted titmouse



FROM LEFT: MIKE MATTHEWS; CHRISTINE HAINES; ANNE DUVAL





Black-capped chickadee



Blue jay

“Blue jays will pick out heavier seeds—the ones with higher oil content,” Dylan explains. They’ll bury them slightly underground, tucked under leaves or even in the garden mulch. “Larger birds including jays and crows will store peanuts with the shells on, but smaller species don’t have the capacity to grab a full large shell like that,” Dylan continues. Nuthatches seem to prefer sunflower chips out of the shell, and they’ll “cram it in behind loose bark,” Dylan says.

ORGANIZED CHAOS

“There are two styles of caching: either very diligently relocating hundreds or thousands of seeds, or scattering stored seeds and reencountering the supply in the future,” Dylan says. Both strategies are effective. The diligent species are able to pull this off thanks to an amazing adaptation. “Chickadee brains grow in the fall to hold the information of remembering where seeds are planted,” Dylan explains. Tufted titmouse is another species that experiences hippocampus swelling during the caching season.



Acorn woodpecker



Red-breasted nuthatch



Squirrel digging up
a cached peanut



Sunflower

doing all the hard work, so they'll follow the chickadees or nuthatches to see where they bury the seeds and then they'll raid the caches," Dylan says. To combat this food theft, the clever creatures sometimes move their caches. Squirrels have been seen digging false holes to trick any onlookers.

UNIQUE STRATEGIES

Dylan recalls seeing an iconic caching species on a visit to California. He says, "Acorn woodpeckers drill holes into trees and poles to store the acorns. As the acorns get older they shrink, so the birds check on their stash and keep moving them to tighter spots." He adds that this species is especially social. "These family groups help protect the cache, primarily from other acorn woodpecker families."

Other species show even more specialized behavior. "Usually we associate caching with seeds, but shrikes are fascinating predatory songbirds that also store food," Dylan says. "Both loggerhead and northern

These birds often pick out the largest kernels of sunflower when they are stocking up.

Birds aren't the only critters that gather in the fall. Watch the squirrels closely, and you'll find them burying food treasures. Most species of squirrel are scatter hoarders, dispersing seeds and nuts throughout their territories. They are likely using spatial memory clues to help relocate their snacks.

These natural cupboards aren't always safe and secure. Other species simply raid the pantries. "A few birds have learned that someone else is

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: CONSTANTINOSZ/GETTY IMAGES; CHRISTINE HAINES; GAIL BUQUOI; DOUGLAS HERR/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



FASCINATING CACHING FEATS

Some nut-collecting critters take this habit to amazing extremes

- Clark's nutcrackers may store 100,000 seeds annually.
- Chickadees can remember cache locations for at least 28 days.
- Some birds in the corvid family have varying physical adaptations in their mouth or neck to allow them to carry more food at a time, such as a jay's ability to hold multiple acorns.
- Some squirrels may only recover as little as 26% of the seeds they have cached.

Squirrel cache



Loggerhead shrike



shrikes have a tendency to impale prey items on thorny bushes, cactus or even barbed wire.” These thorny storage spots are called larders. Shrikes sometimes eat their catch immediately, or they leave it on the larder for later.

FORGOTTEN FARE

“Caching is a super important adaption for birds that overwinter in extreme environments. Without the ability to store foods, they wouldn’t survive,” Dylan says. It is also an important process for the forests and plants.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ANTAGAIN/GETTY IMAGES; BOB KOTHEBEUTEL;
MIKE MATTHEWS; NATA DOBROVLSKAYA/SHUTTERSTOCK

According to research published by Peter Smallwood, associate professor of biology at University of Richmond, and colleagues, when squirrels are establishing caches of nuts, they will eat the white oak varieties earlier in the winter as these acorns sprout shortly after being buried, while red oak species are less perishable and can be stored over winter before sprouting in the spring.

Dylan says, “Animals help to transport seeds by putting them down in the soil, which offers protection from the harsh winter. Then not all of the seeds are eaten, and many sprout and grow, making caching an important method of forest regeneration and spread.”

When it comes to cache, what’s good for the birds is also good for the woods. ●

Freelance writer Ken Keffer has a secret cache of peanut butter cups that helps him survive the long Midwest winters.



Clark's nutcracker



SMALL TREES

for smart designs

Learn how compact trees can anchor a landscape and elevate every corner of your yard with their texture and seasonal flair

BY JODI HELMER

FROM LEFT: DOREEN WYNJA FOR ©MONROVIA; WWW.PROVENWINNERS.COM





Pinpoint Gold
false cypress

Left: Zig Zag redbud

Right: Grace
smoke tree

Below: Snow Fountains
weeping cherry tree

Far right:
Crape myrtles

Bottom right:
Paperbark maple



Small trees can transform even the most modest landscape. “Your yard is only going to be so interesting if you’re only planting shrubs and perennials,” says Sam Niemann, founder of the Chicago-based landscape design firm Grown by Design.

Planting small trees—specimens that reach a mature height of less than 20 feet—add interest without overpowering a garden space. With the right design strategies, small trees can make a big impact within a landscape.

FOCAL POINT

For a serious wow factor, use a small tree such as the Zig Zag redbud as the focal point in a small landscape where

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: EVENSTAD GARDEN ©DOREENWYNJA.COM; NAMEINFAME, LUCENTUS/GETTY IMAGES (2); THE VINE STUDIOS/SHUTTERSTOCK



SHOP SMART

Along with checking the usual plant care requirements, such as sunlight, soil and water, the mature size of a tree is another important factor to consider before buying.

BE SIZE WISE: Just because a plant is labeled “dwarf” or “small” doesn’t mean it will stay as petite as you might imagine. Research mature sizes to better understand a tree’s growth rate, if it will fit in your space long term or if you will need to prune regularly. Most importantly, Sam says, “Make sure you’re buying a tree that’s suited to your garden.”

the zigzagged stems and branches and bright pink early spring blooms will turn heads. Snow Fountains weeping cherry trees also create outstanding visual appeal in the home garden with showy white blooms in spring and vibrant foliage in autumn.

Unlike shrubs and perennials that can be moved as a garden matures, small trees are anchor plants that will remain rooted in their spots. As the visual centerpiece in a design, small trees should be planted first, Sam says.

TEXTURE

Although perennials and ornamental grasses often take a leading role in adding texture in a landscape, small trees shouldn’t be overlooked. The

peeling bark on paperbark maples, crape myrtles and seven-son flowers add texture and drama in the garden. For over-the-top texture, plant a grace smoke tree and delight in the featherlike, salmon-colored plumes that appear in summer.

Small evergreens are excellent for texture too. A false cypress or a compact blue spruce adds finely needled softness that pairs beautifully with more structured plantings. “Evergreens give you a wide variety of texture that contrasts well with broader-leaved trees,” Sam says.

CONTRAST AND COLOR

Great gardens are colorful and filled with contrast. Sam often starts a new



**Right: Dwarf
blue spruce**

**Below: Little Gem
magnolia**

design by choosing plantings with three foliage tones: classic green, red or purple, and icy blue. The bright, glossy green leaves of a Little Gem magnolia; lobed or lacy reddish purple leaves of a Japanese maple; and dwarf varieties of blue spruce are ideal specimens to add contrast and color to the landscape.

LAYERS AND HEIGHT

Layering is essential in gardens of all sizes. In a compact space, small trees might be the tallest plants in the garden but then they may form the middle tier, between towering canopies and small shrubs, in larger gardens. Varying the heights of small trees—incorporating some that reach a mature height of 10 feet with others that top out at 20 feet—helps keep the eye moving, Sam says.

SEASONAL INTEREST

Small trees also offer sensational seasonal interest. Choose a Forest



FROM LEFT: MARGARET WIKTOR/SHUTTERSTOCK; RM FLORAL/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO





Pansy redbud for its pink spring blooms, rich summer foliage and glowing fall color. Or select serviceberry for white blossoms in spring followed by small purple fruits in summer. “You want different colors, different shapes and different textures in the garden during each season,” Sam says. “You can find lots of small trees that offer four seasons of interest.”

SHADE

While it’s true that a 10-foot-tall tree won’t cast as much shade as a 40-foot-tall tree, even modest trees cast shade. “Smaller trees really shine in small gardens,” Sam says. “The only way to add shade to a small garden may be to plant a small tree.”

UNDERSTORY OPTIONS

In gardens with many larger trees, smaller specimens can work well as understory plantings that help create multiple layers of tree canopy and can fill in the gaps between larger trees and smaller shrubs and perennials. “When you’re planting understory plants, your very first consideration needs to be the site requirement,” Sam says. “If it’s a shady spot beneath another tree, do not plant trees that require full sun.”

Small trees might not have the same impact of towering over the landscape as large trees do, but the right specimens can offer color, texture, shade and habitat, giving them their own uniquely powerful purposes in a garden’s design. ●

Top: Japanese maple

Bottom right: Forest Pansy redbud

Bottom left: Autumn Brilliance serviceberry



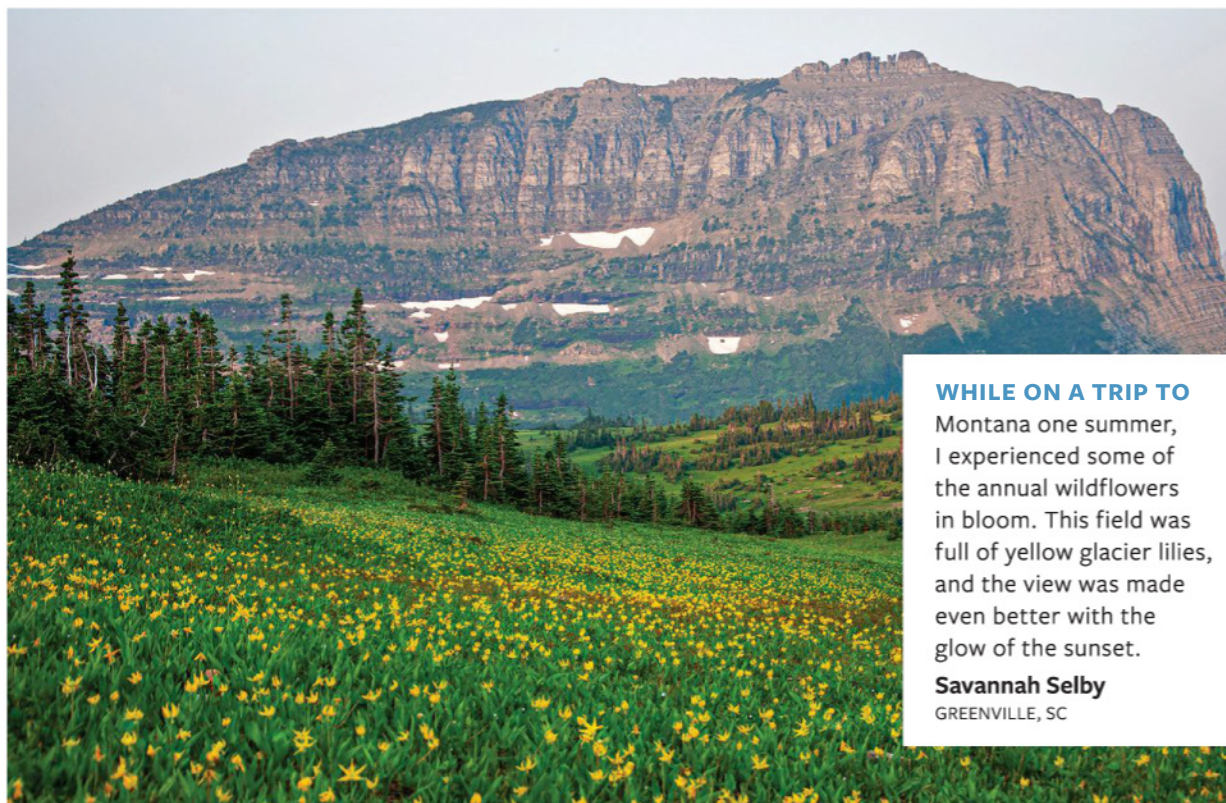
North Carolina-based garden writer Jodi Helmer can’t resist the appeal of a Japanese maple in the garden.

A large, dense cluster of monarch butterflies hangs from a tree branch, filling most of the frame. The butterflies are illuminated by warm, golden sunlight, highlighting the intricate patterns on their wings. The background is dark and out of focus, showing more butterflies and the texture of the tree bark.

MONARCHS MIGRATE

from the interior of the West to spend the winter along California's central coast. Unfortunately, their numbers decline every year. They are a challenge to photograph because they rest high up in shaded trees, and you need to aim the camera almost straight up. I snapped this photo just as the rising sun illuminated the edges of the foreground butterflies. The entire background consists of other monarchs.

Greg Tucker LOS ANGELES, CA



WHILE ON A TRIP TO

Montana one summer, I experienced some of the annual wildflowers in bloom. This field was full of yellow glacier lilies, and the view was made even better with the glow of the sunset.

Savannah Selby
GREENVILLE, SC

BEST OF THE WEST

A round up of striking reader snapshots that showcase the region's wild wonders, from mountains to deserts

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY

that a Kentucky girl sees a California condor in the wild, but I did when visiting the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Arizona. As I looked over the side of the Navajo Bridge, I heard a loud commotion behind me. I turned to see this condor sitting about 15 feet away from me.

A tag on the bird said Z5, and according to the Condor Spotter website, this female was born in April 2020 at the San Diego Wild Animal Park.

Lori Roberts PENDLETON, KY





MY HUSBAND KYLE

grew up frequenting the Oregon coast. He couldn't wait to take me to Bandon, his favorite coastal town. I snapped this photo of gorse bush blooming over a beautiful Bandon beach.

Kate McClung LAKEVIEW, OR

Do Your Part

In Oregon, gorse is an invasive plant found mainly along the coast. Clean your shoes and pets after hiking in this area to avoid spreading it.

MY FOCUS WAS ON

getting a good photo of sandhill cranes in flight at Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area in southern Arizona.

I tracked these birds and saw them stacked three high and liked the symmetry in pose and positioning. I snapped a few photos, but this one is my favorite.

Anthony Attanasio

PINETOP, AZ

Crane Central

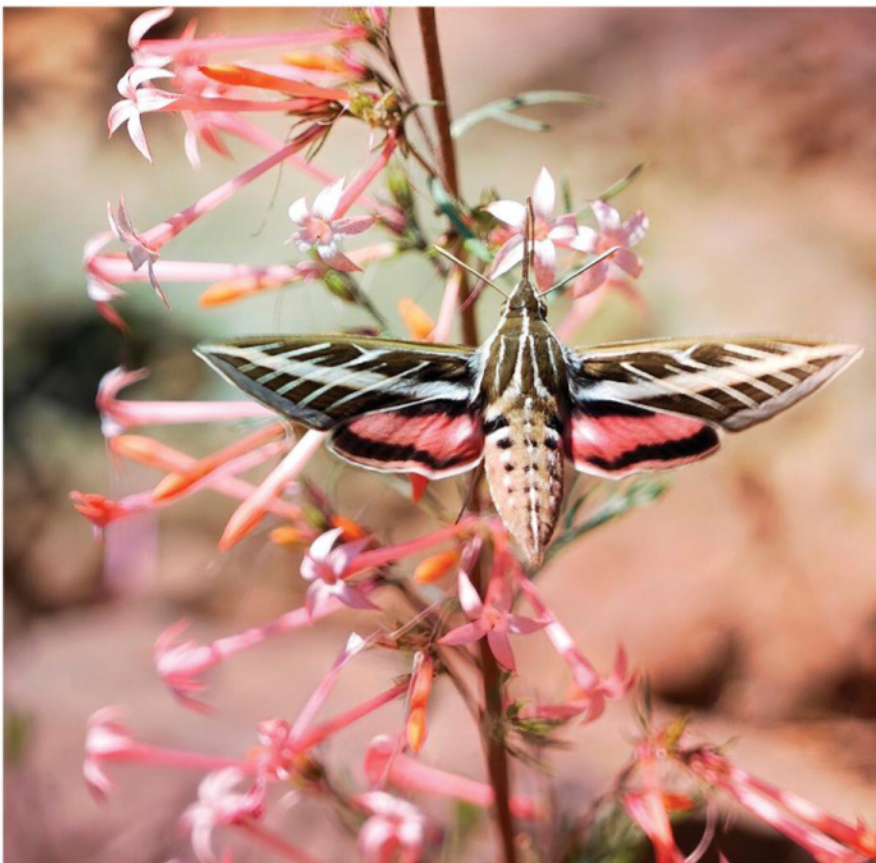
Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area is a major roost site for sandhill cranes from the beginning of October until the middle of March. Visit during that time to see cranes and other wetland birds such as grebes, teals and northern shovelers.





EVERY YEAR, DURING the first few weeks of January, mountain bluebirds migrate through the nearby hills and on to the mountains. Flocks of them feed on the nearby juniper berries. These beauties posed perfectly along the barbed wire fence close by. This photo was taken in the hillsides above Sparks, Nevada.

Cherie Garrison RENO, NV



I WAS FORTUNATE TO capture this photo of a white-lined sphinx, also known as a hummingbird moth, while hiking in the Ochoco National Forest in Crook County, Oregon. I love this shot because it was the first time I had ever seen such a creature. Plus, capturing a photo that was not all blurry with such beautiful details was icing on the cake.

Kari Ferber POWELL BUTTE, OR



THIS SCENE FROM

the Killpecker Sand Dunes north of Rock Springs, Wyoming, shows a beautiful glimpse of a blooming smallflower sandverbena.

Mike Gualdoni ST. LOUIS, MO

Fit for Thrill Seekers

Known for sledding and sandboarding, Killpecker Sand Dunes is family friendly, with soft dunes for explorers of all ages. Expect to see dune buggies, dirt bikes and ATVs in addition to hikers and Frisbee players.

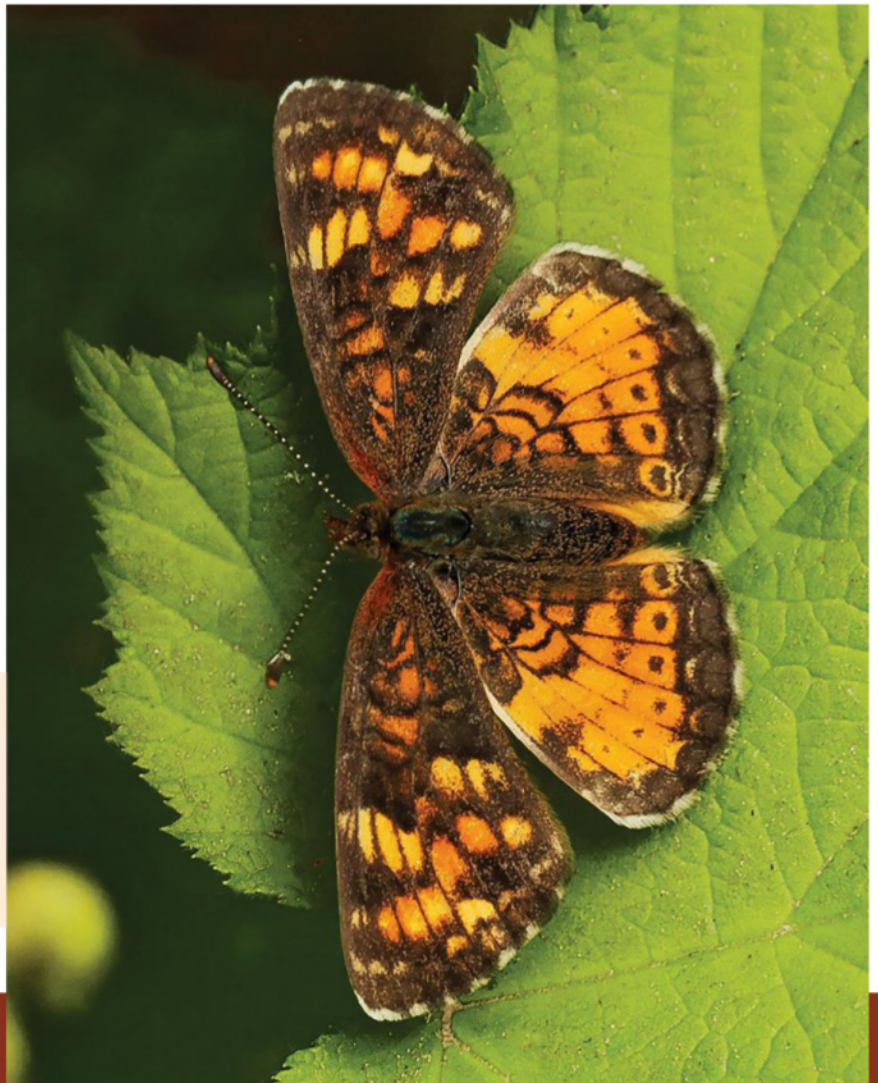
I FOUND THIS

northern crescent butterfly near Bell Canyon Waterfall near Salt Lake City while hiking with my 1-year-old on my back. I was surprised when it didn't fly away and allowed me to get within a foot of it as it rested near the creek. I saw a lot of wildlife on this hike, but this butterfly is what stands out in my memory.

Michael Larsen SANDY, UT

A Tricky-to-ID Trio

Northern crescents, common in Canada and the western and northern U.S., may be confused with two relatives where ranges overlap: the pearl crescent and the tawny crescent.





I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE

cactus wren, the Arizona state bird, while visiting Tucson one winter. Their bright white eyebrows and red eyes, and their bold and curious nature really make them stand out. I admire their ability to thrive in this rugged desert environment.

Linda Scher MINNEAPOLIS, MN •

ALL-NEW BOOK FOR 2025



200+ Backyard Tips & Tricks In One BIG Book!



REG. \$39.98
NOW ONLY

\$10

**+ FREE
SHIPPING!**

PLUS
**FREE
GIFT**

Now everything you need to create a splendid, bird-friendly garden space is right at your fingertips with *The Best of Birds & Blooms 2025*! This all-new edition is packed with our editors' favorite tips, tricks & photos from the past year of *Birds & Blooms* magazine.



LIMITED-TIME Offer! Order now at:

birdsandblooms.com/BB2503SA
or scan the QR code at left!

- **200+ proven tips**
from experts & hobby gardeners
- **320+ gorgeous**
bird & flower photos
- **Photos of the year**
in every chapter
- **Insightful bird facts**
& zone maps
- **240 glossy pages**
with easy-to-read type

Ask the Experts

Birding and gardening pros take on your toughest questions

Q I have a cosmos that I planted in a large pot. It grew all summer until the stem was over 10 feet tall, and the flower didn't bloom until fall. Why did it get so tall and take so long to bloom?

Brenda East BRUNSWICK, NJ

Melinda: Most *Cosmos bipinnatus* varieties grow between 1 and 6 feet tall, but it is not uncommon to find some growing much taller, such as yours. It does take these cosmos 10 to 12 weeks to go from seed to bloom. Since the plant was putting all its energy into growing taller, it may have further delayed the onset of flowers. Overfertilizing the plants, especially with high nitrogen fertilizers, promotes leaf and stem growth and can delay or inhibit flowering. Next year, try starting the plants indoors or purchase transplants for earlier blooms. Or just think of the late bloomers as added beauty in the fall garden.

Sonata Carmine is a shorter type of cosmos, topping out at 24 inches tall.



Q I have two apple trees and had them pruned in the spring. Now one tree has an abundance of apples. Many branches have clusters of four or five apples growing very close together. Should I pull off a few apples from each cluster, leaving only one or two in each bunch to have fewer but bigger and better developed apples?

Pamela Marler LITTLETON, CO

Melinda: Fruit thinning provides many benefits for the tree but can be a difficult task for the gardener who cared for the tree and waited for an abundant harvest. Thinning not only helps increase the size of the fruit, but it also prevents the trees from producing too much fruit one year and little or none the following year. Plus, branches weighted down by an abundant crop are at risk of breaking. It is best to thin apples before their diameter is the size of a dime. Thinning fruit when small allows the tree to focus its energy into the remaining apples and developing fruit buds for next year. Start by removing the smallest and any damaged apples. Leave one apple for every 6 inches. This may result in some fruit-producing spurs—the very short branches that produce fruit—being left bare. Use care when thinning the apples to avoid damaging the fruit-bearing spurs.

Q I bought a 40-pound bag of birdseed and then discovered it had tiny moths in it. They started multiplying inside my garage, so a friend suggested I put bay leaves inside the seed container and around my garage. That seemed to help get rid of the moths, but now I'm dealing with larvae crawling out of the container. I squash at least 20 larvae a day. I don't want to waste birdseed by throwing it away. Is there any way to rid the seed of larvae?

Carol Johnson PERRY, NY

Kenn and Kimberly: Unless the birdseed is very old, the presence of moths doesn't necessarily mean it has gone bad. Many of the birds that eat seeds also eagerly eat moths and larvae. When we discover that our birdseed is infested with moths, we put it in an airtight container and continue feeding it to the birds until that supply is gone; then we wash out the container thoroughly before putting in any new seed supply. It's possible to buy pantry moth traps with pheromones that will attract and trap the adult moths, but we prefer to simply feed them to the birds.

Q We enjoy planting flowers and putting up sugar-water feeders for hummingbirds every year, but this year we saw far fewer of them than usual. We make sure to keep our sugar water fresh and our feeders clean. Where could our hummingbirds have gone?

Kurt and Sandy Hannemann MEQUON, WI

Kenn and Kimberly: Local populations of ruby-throated hummingbirds change from year to year, and the reasons are usually not apparent. It could be that some of your local breeding birds were killed by a storm or other event during their migration or on their tropical wintering grounds, in which case others will eventually take their place in your yard. There are also times when the local weather is exceptionally good for the growth of wildflowers, so the hummingbirds have an abundance of natural food and are less likely to visit gardens or feeders. That's always an optimistic possibility.



Female ruby-throated hummingbird

Q When is the best time to cut back decorative grasses? And what is the best way to do it?

fe **Teresa Holland** GREENFIELD, IN

Melinda: Leaving grasses stand for winter provides texture, motion and habitat for some beneficial insects. If you prefer a tidier winter garden, wait for the plants to go completely dormant before cutting them back. Tie the grasses together to make for cleaner and faster cleanup. Cut plants back to several inches above the soil surface or above any new growth that sprouts in spring. Use a hand pruner, a lopper, hedge shears or a string trimmer, or weed whip, with a rigid plastic blade. For smaller grasses like blue fescue, just use your gloved hands like a comb to remove the old leaves from the new growth. Wear gloves and safety glasses when using power tools and handling the often-sharp-edged grasses.

Prairie Winds Niagara Falls
switch grass



Prothonotary warbler

Q We have multiple feeders and see countless birds in our yard every day, but we never see any dead birds. What happens when birds get sick and die, and where do they go?

Paul and Donna Sappenfield FRANKLIN, IN

Kenn and Kimberly: When a predator takes a bird, it may not leave any remains in a noticeable place. But when birds die of disease, their bodies go through several processes of decomposition. Initially, scavengers such as insects, rodents and larger animals may consume the carcass. Then, microorganisms like bacteria and fungi break down tissues, leading to the release of carbon, nitrogen and other essential elements into the environment. If the bird dies in an area where decomposition is slow, such as a desert, its remains may mummify instead. Ultimately, the remnants of the bird will return to the ecosystem, enriching the soil and supporting plant growth, demonstrating the interconnectedness of life and death in nature.

Q Can you identify these seed pods? I found them in a meadow in upstate New York in October. The seeds that had been in them had already scattered. **Evelyn Asher** BLOOMFIELD, NY

Melinda: These pods are from the North American native wild cucumber (*Echinocystis lobata*). These vines are most noticeable in late summer when covered with yellowish white flowers. This fast-growing annual vine can reach over 25 feet and often climbs and covers nearby plants. When the spiny seed pods turn brown and dry, the bottom opens to expel the seeds. The fruits are not edible but are often used in dried arrangements. Handle them with care, as they can cause a burning sensation in some people.



WARBLER: DAVID WEACHUM

Q My birdhouses appear to stay occupied all year, so I hesitate to open, disturb or clean them. Even when I've tried to move one to an outdoor table to inspect and clean it, birds continue using it! When can or should I clean out old nests, if at all?

Alexa Conway MERIDIAN, ID

Kenn and Kimberly: In spring and summer, birds build nests in birdhouses to lay eggs and raise their young. In fall and winter, they may use the same birdhouses to roost in overnight. The best time to clean them out is late summer or early fall, after the last brood has fledged. Dispose of the old nest far away, scrub the inside of the box with a very mild bleach solution, then rinse and let it dry completely. The birds will still use the house for roosting and will build a new nest in spring when they're ready to start a new family.

MEET THE EXPERTS



Kimberly and Kenn Kaufman are the duo behind the Kaufman Field Guide series. They speak and lead bird trips all over the world.



Melinda Myers is a nationally known, award-winning garden expert, TV and radio host, and author of more than 20 books.



Home, Sweet Twiggy Home

Learn all about squirrels' nests and how to prevent unwanted ones **BY EMILY HANNEMANN**

Young eastern fox squirrels in a cavity nest

FROM TOP: PETER PANEX/SHUTTERSTOCK; ANNAMARIE YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES



Eastern gray squirrel with nest materials

DETERRING A NEW NESTER

If a squirrel is constructing a nest in an inconvenient area, use motion-sensor lights or play music to warn the squirrel away. Seal off possible entrances to garages, sheds and other places you don't want squirrel dens.

We love the thought of birds nesting in our yards. The idea that such a small creature could feel safe enough in our presence to raise its young is heartwarming. But not all clusters of twigs and leaves you spot are birds' nests. Here's how to tell if what you thought belonged to a bird is, in fact, a squirrel's nest, and learn a little more about these furry visitors' nesting behavior.

A Messy Ball of Leaves

Often, especially in fall, large clusters of leaves seem to show up on tree branches. Many might assume those are birds' nests, but more than just birds build their homes in trees.

Alissa Kakatsch, an assistant turkey and pheasant ecologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, says squirrels build two kinds of nests. The first, she refers to as a den—these nests show up inside existing structures, such as tree cavities, boats or other buildings. The second, called a drey, you might spot in your yard.

"The standard squirrel's nest would be up in trees, and it would be made of twigs, leaves and other, softer material on the inside,"

Alissa says. "Those, you'll typically see high up: 20 to 25 feet, or even 35 feet high in the trees."

Assess the Size and Spot

One of the key differences between a squirrel's nest and a bird's nest is its size. According to Alissa, while both birds and squirrels can build their nests on forked tree branches, squirrels' nests tend to be larger. "Also, typically birds' nests will be secluded or more hidden," Alissa says, "and they won't be as open in the branches of trees where you can see." Red squirrels build nests in pine trees, while gray squirrels are usually responsible for the dreys we spot in treetops.

Notable Nesting Habits

Similarly to birds, squirrels can have multiple broods—or in the case of squirrels, litters—per year.

Squirrels will nest from spring through fall in many states, and young don't "fledge" until they are about 12 weeks old.

Although some think of squirrels and their offspring as pests, remember that they aren't going out of their way to make your life inconvenient. They're doing their best out in nature, just like birds. And as we do for birds, we owe them a bit of understanding and appreciation. So, the next time you look up and see a huge clump of leaves plastered in the fork of your tree branch, know a critter raised its young in your yard ... just one with a bushy tail, rather than wings.

Emily Hannemann, digital editor, enjoys watching the antics of her neighborhood squirrels, and she welcomes them to eat at her backyard ground feeder.

TO MOVE, OR NOT

Follow this expert advice if you're thinking about relocating a squirrel's nest

While there are methods to discourage squirrels, Alissa Kakatsch strongly recommends against relocating or disturbing nests, especially if there are babies, also known as kits, present. "You wouldn't want to risk the health or well-being of the young, or to risk orphaning them," she says. "We'd recommend leaving a nest alone during the months of March to October, just in case it's being utilized."

Consider contacting a wildlife rehabilitation center before removing a nest in a troublesome spot.

How do you prep the garden for winter?

Readers share tried-and-true tips for putting their landscapes to bed for the season

I place small stakes in the ground to mark where plants such as milkweed will die back to the ground so that I don't accidentally pull them when weeding in spring.

fe Kathy Eppers ALEDO, TX

Empty all patio pots, including plants and dirt, and clean them for winter storage.

fe Keith Golden PINGREE GROVE, IL

I water all my plants deeply before an upcoming cold snap, especially if it hasn't rained lately. **fe** Juli Seyfried GROVE CITY, OH



Eastern tiger swallowtail

I garden for butterflies, and some of them make their chrysalises and overwinter. **I'm always gentle if I cut down the foliage from old plants** so that I don't disturb the overwintering butterflies. **fe** Connie Etter MARTINSVILLE, IN



American goldfinch on sunflower

Preparing for winter is easy! I *leave spent flowers and plants standing* to provide food for winter birds, and I rake leaves into my flower beds. The leaves shelter insects and are a great place for ground-feeding birds to find food.

fe Ken Orich
LETHBRIDGE, AB

Divide and transplant some perennials.

Hostas, peonies, coral bells and phlox benefit from being thinned out.

Sandy Miller MADISON, WI

YOUR TURN!

Q: What is your best spring bird feeding advice?

Share your answer with us at birdsandblooms.com/submit.

YOU DON'T SAY

Caption This!

What could this cute critter be up to?

While walking in one of his favorite nature preserves, Michael Rossacci of Arlington, Massachusetts, came across this squirrel with a snack. "We both froze in our tracks, contemplating our next moves," Michael says.

SHARE YOUR CAPTION

Your funny caption for this silly squirrel could appear in the next issue. Share your clever idea at birdsandblooms.com/caption.



LAST ISSUE'S
**WINNING
CAPTION**
"Something
touched my foot!
Something
touched my foot!"

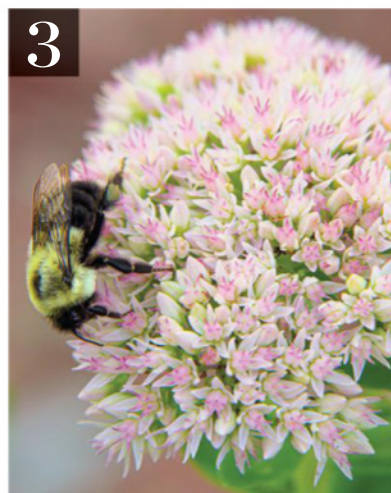
Caption submitted by Kathryn Rucci of Orlando, Florida. **fe**

SHARE YOUR BEST FUNNY NATURE PHOTOS! Follow the Submission Guidelines on page 55.

Pops of Color

How many of these fall-blooming favorites can you ID?

answers
on the
bottom!



ANSWERS 1. BLACK-EYED SUSAN 2. COSMOS 3. SEDUM 4. BLANKET FLOWER 5. PANSY 6. CHRYSANTHEMUM



Find the Hummingbird

In each issue, we hide a hummingbird like the one above left. Enter to win at birdsandblooms.com/contests if you find it. Winners get a one-year subscription to *Birds & Blooms*. In the Summer issue, we hid it on page 36.

HIDDEN OBJECT GUIDELINES

No purchase necessary to enter to win. Purchase will not improve your chances of winning. Sweepstakes is open to legal residents age 18 years or older of the U.S., its territories and possessions, or of Canada (excluding the Province of Quebec). Sweepstakes begins on Oct. 17, 2025, and ends on Jan. 16, 2026. Visit birdsandblooms.com/contests for official rules. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Sweepstakes sponsored by RDA Enthusiast Brands, LLC.

Contact Us!

CUSTOMER CARE

For subscriptions, renewals, gifts, payments, account info and inquiries:

Email: customercare@birdsandblooms.com

Visit: birdsandblooms.com/customercare

Write:

BIRDS & BLOOMS CUSTOMER CARE
PO Box 5805
Tipton IA 52772-0525

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Write:

BIRDS & BLOOMS
1610 N 2ND ST STE 102
MILWAUKEE WI 53212-3906

Email: feedback@birdsandblooms.com

Contests: birdsandblooms.com/contests

Consumer Information:

Birds & Blooms may share information about you with third parties for the purpose of offering products and services that may interest you. If you would rather not receive such offers via postal mail, please write to Birds & Blooms Customer Mailing List, P.O. Box 5806, Harlan IA 52772-0526. You can also visit www.tmbi.com/preference-center to manage your preferences and opt out of receiving such offers via email. Please see our Privacy Policy at www.tmbi.com/privacy-policy.

Reprint requests:

Email permissions@TrustedMediaBrands.com to request permission to reprint any material from *Birds & Blooms*.

Submission Guidelines

We love hearing from you—in fact, we couldn't publish this magazine without you!

To share stories, photos, backyard tips, questions for our experts or other content, use the form at birdsandblooms.com/submit and follow the online instructions.

Rights to Submissions: By submitting material to us, you grant the rights set forth on our website, including but not limited to use of the material by our company, affiliates, partners and licensees and the right to use your name, likeness and place of residence (city and state) in connection therewith. We reserve the right to modify, reproduce and distribute the material in any medium and in any matter.

Field Editors

Find content from these field editors in this issue:

fe Anne Duvall, Kathy Eppers, Connie Etter, Keith Golden, Teresa Holland, Katie Myer, Ken Orich, Kathryn Rucci, Juli Seyfried

Volunteer nature lovers from across the U.S. and Canada belong to our *Birds & Blooms* Field Editor family. They share tips, stories, photos and happenings from their very own backyards, neighborhoods and regions.

Birds & Blooms

EDITORIAL

Content Directors Nicole Doster, Kirsten Schrader

Senior Editor Megan White

Editor Srinwanti Das

Creative Director Raeann Thompson

Associate Creative Director Kristen Stecklein

Art Director Payton Grote

Senior Print Publication Designer
Manish Kumar

Deputy Editor, Copy Desk Ann M. Walter

Senior Copy Editors Suchismita Ukil, Elizabeth Pollock Bruch

Copy Editor Rayan Naqash

Associate Copy Editor Rachana Rana

Production Coordinator Jon Syverson

Birding Experts Kenn and Kimberly Kaufman

Horticulture Expert Melinda Myers

Senior Editor (digital) Lori Vanover

Editor (digital) Emily E. Hannemann

BUSINESS

Chief Revenue Officer Jack Essig

VP, Sales Kim Krubeck

VP, Marketing Michael Boccacino

Director, Research & Insights Lab
Sebastian Rodriguez

Head of Programmatic Paul Kholodny

East Coast Directors, Brand Partnerships
Mallory Factor, Michelle Imbrogno, Kari Nestor, Liz Spitaleri

Midwest Directors, Brand Partnerships
Meredith Alenky, Isabella von der Linden

West Coast Directors, Brand Partnerships
Isabella Carrado, Heather Kimoto

Direct Response Advertising

Greg Pepe, gpepe@mediapeople.com

Nancy Forman, nforman@mediapeople.com

Director, Operations John Stark

TRUSTED MEDIA BRANDS

Chief Executive Officer Stephen Colvin

Chief Financial Officer Kanuj Malhotra

Chief Marketing Officer

Michelle Korchinski-Ogden

Chief People Officer Jennifer Tyrrell

VP, Benefits & Compensation

Heather Schwartz



Our content is verified by birding and gardening experts for accuracy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cheeky Chipmunks

Dig in to the busy world of these lively little critters

BY CHRISTINE PETERSON



25

Of the planet's 25 chipmunk species, 24 live in North America.



9 *Eastern chipmunks reproduce twice a year, giving birth to up to nine pups in spring and again in late summer. Newborns are the size of bumblebees.*

165 These tiny rodents can gather and transport up to 165 acorns in a day.



30 Chipmunks prefer underground homes, digging burrows up to 30 feet long and 3 feet deep.

8

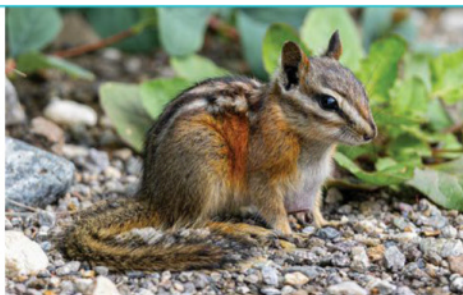
Young chipmunks forge out on their own to claim their territories at only 8 to 10 weeks old.

5

Each chipmunk has five black and two white stripes from the shoulder to the tail.

20

To be sure that chipmunks can't jump on bird feeders and eat all the seeds, place feeders at least 20 feet away from buildings.



2

Weighing under 2 ounces, the least chipmunk is the smallest of the species.



Life was meant to be
lived, and curiosity
must be kept alive.”

—*Eleanor Roosevelt*

Robert Elliott
GLADE PARK, CO

